



American Recreation Coalition

Dedicated to the protection and enhancement of everyone's right to health and happiness through recreation.

NEWS

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GREAT OUTDOORS WEEK 2006: MEETING AMERICANS' NEEDS TODAY AND TOMORROW

Washington, D.C. - Great Outdoors Week 2006, June 12 -17, will highlight efforts underway to enhance outdoor recreation for all Americans in the 21st century. Volunteerism, public-private partnerships, improving health through recreation, ensuring strong recreational trails and scenic byways programs, the unveiling of the internet-based Toolbox for the Great Outdoors, Second Edition and more are topics to be addressed in a series of forums throughout the week. Annual awards recognizing the special contributions of many outdoor recreation heroes are a highlight of the week's events. Great Outdoors Week will again be coordinated by the American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and will include events hosted by more than a dozen federal agencies and national organizations.

MONDAY, JUNE 12: Activities begin with "Health and Recreation: Parks and Partners," featuring a presentation by **Fran Mainella, Director of the National Park Service** on steps that agency is taking to boost physical activity during visits to units of the National Park System. She will discuss agency response to an action plan involving seven pilot efforts developed by the National Park Service Advisory Board. The gathering will be held in Room 5164, Main Interior Building, 1849 C Street, NW, beginning at 3:30 pm. The week's opening reception, "**The Great Outdoors: From Sea to Shining Sea**", follows from 5:30 to 7:00 pm in the South Penthouse of the U.S. Department of the Interior headquarters. Co-sponsored by Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association and the Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds and the American Recreation Coalition, the reception will feature the release of the **Toolbox for the Great Outdoors – Second Edition** and will honor ARC's **Beacon Award winners**, highlighting the use of technology to manage and enhance recreation.

TUESDAY, JUNE 13: A National Recreation Issues Update begins at 8:30 am with remarks by **Rep. Steve Pearce, New Mexico, Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks**, a review of FY07 budget legislation, discussions regarding FLREA (fee) implementation, and more. This meeting continues until 10:00 am and takes place in Room 1324 of the Longworth House Office Building (LHOB). **The Great Outdoors Week Recreation Exchange** luncheon will be held from 12:00 – 3:00 pm on the USDA Patio (1400 Independence Avenue, SW). **The guest speaker will be the Honorable Dale Hall, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.** He will share his vision for the future of the agency and the part to be played by the National Wildlife Refuge System in helping children to connect to the outdoors in an increasingly “virtual” world. Following his remarks, ARC’s Derrick Crandall and agency officials will present the **2006 Legends Awards**, honoring federal agency “heroes” responsible for advancing recreation opportunities.

A highlight of Tuesday’s schedule is the **18th Annual Sheldon Coleman Award Presentation to be held in the Atrium and private events center at Bobby Van’s Grill, 1201 New York Avenue, NW from 6 – 8 pm (Award Ceremony 7 pm).** This year’s award recipient is U.S. Representative Thomas E. Petri, a long-time champion of national recreation programs. Dessert and coffee will be served in the Recreation Suite, located in the building, from 8 – 9 pm.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14: The day’s events begin with a **Recreation Policy Forum: 21st Century Models for Partnerships in the Great Outdoors** from 9:30 am - 11:15 am. Hosted by ARC, ReserveAmerica and PricewaterhouseCoopers, the location will be announced shortly. From 12:00 noon until 1:30 pm, the **Coalition for Recreational Trails and ARC** will host a **Recreational Trails Program Briefing and Awards Program** in the House Committee on Agriculture Hearing Room, 1300 Longworth House Office Building. Refreshments will be served. Wednesday’s events continue from 4:00 – 5:00 pm with a status report on the **National Scenic Byways Program – “Byways 2021: 15 Years of Progress – and More Opportunities Ahead,”** followed by a reception. The location of this celebration of the Byways program’s accomplishments and bright future will be announced soon.

THURSDAY, JUNE 15: Thursday’s activities will commence with the organizing meeting of the Public Lands Access Forum, a new initiative by leading national recreation, conservation, tourism, local government and transportation organizations to address issues key to fulfilling the potential for benefits from public lands. Among the topics that will be discussed is a series of sessions focusing on challenges facing roads and trails on public lands, as well as the importance of connecting 21st Century youth to their public land legacy. This event will begin at 10 am and conclude at 11:45 am, allowing participants to travel to a Forest Service Open House beginning at noon at the agency’s headquarters. A light lunch will be available. Hosting the session will be the agency’s brand new Director of Recreation, Jim Bedwell. Key forest Service initiatives will be displayed and described in the agency’s conference center.

For the third year, the Washington-focused Great Outdoors Week will be a key component of **Great Outdoors Month**. First proclaimed by President George W. Bush in 2004, Great Outdoors Month – June – includes a long list of recreation community events and meetings, such as National Trails Day and National Fishing and Boating Week. Additional details on Great Outdoors Week and Month 2006 are posted on www.funoutdoors.com, ARC's website, as they become available.

